



TRENCH SAFETY

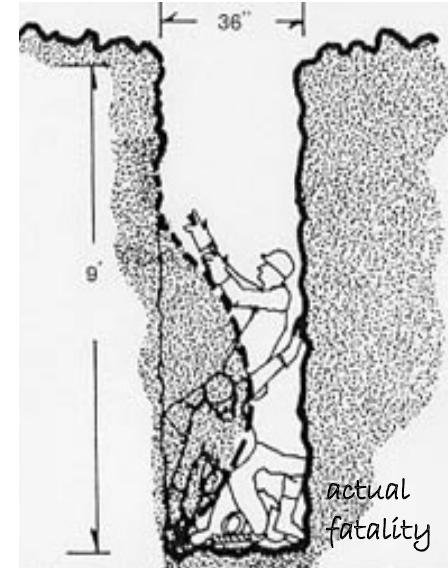
**Excavations are recognized as one of the most
hazardous construction conditions for Workers and the Public**

The Fatality Rate for excavation work is 112% higher than the rate for general construction work.

Prevent Trench/Excavation Cave-ins

OSHA Highlights: www.osha.gov

- ❖ 5 feet and deeper requires shoring, sloping, or trench box, i.e. Protective Systems;
- ❖ Competent Person required to provide inspections to trench and Protective System;
- ❖ Provide for proper access/egress, ladders for access/egress at 4 feet;
- ❖ Keep excavated material (spoils) more than 2 feet from edge of excavation;
- ❖ Identify location of utilities; Support Utilities. Call DigSafe 1-888-344-7233



DPS Highlights: www.mass.gov/dps

- ❖ Excavators who use hoisting or other mechanical equipment must only use workers licensed by the Department of Public Safety. (Mass. Hoisting License number, license grade and expiration date must be included on permit.)
- ❖ DPS is currently in the process of developing trenching regulations to protect the public from accidental and unauthorized entry. These regulations may have permitting provisions and other safety and health requirements.
- ❖ Visit the DPS website for the current status of this regulation.

*Don't forget other potentially fatal hazards exist, including **asphyxiation** due to lack of oxygen in a confined space, inhalation of **toxic fumes**, **drowning**, etc. **Electrocution or explosions** can occur when workers contact underground utilities.*

Note: OSHA has a National Emphasis Program (NEP) for the programmed safety inspection of trenching and excavation operations which allows them to initiate an inspection during the course of routine travel during duty or non-duty hours, as well as in areas of high construction activity for the purpose of identifying all trenching and excavation sites within that area. Trenching/excavation worksites brought to the attention of the Area Offices (Braintree, Methuen, Springfield) are inspected.

Between 1992 and 2001, trenching and excavation accidents resulted in 542 fatalities nationwide, averaging 54 each year.

The Division of Occupational Safety (DOS) offers a free consultation service designed to help private employers recognize and control potential safety and health hazards at their worksites, improve their safety and health program, and assist in training employees.

Massachusetts Division of Occupational Safety 617-969-7177
www.mass.gov/dos/consult

March 2005